THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) Amendment proposals in the Trade Unions Act, 1926 are under consideration of the Government. The Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill, 2001 has been passed by the Rajya Sabha on 2.8.2001. In the proposed amendments, *inter-alia* there are provisions that office bearers of the trade unions will be elected and their duration will not be more than 3 years, the proportion of office bearers to be connected with the industry to be enhanced from 1/2 to 2/3rd of the total number of office bearers.

(c) to (e) A representation from the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Coimbatore, has been received. In their letter, they have brought to the notice of the Government the announcements made by the Hon'ble Union Finance Minister in his budget speech on 28.2.2001 regarding amendments in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970. These suggestions have been noted.

Child labourers in hotels, dhabas, etc.

† 3454. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons that inspite of the child labour laws in force there are, no signs of reduction in the number of child labourers working in Hotels, Dhabas and on the roads;

(b) whether Government have taken any measures to prevent it; and

(c) whether there is any provision for strict punishment for those who violate labour laws; if so, the reasons for non implementation thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL); (a) to (c) Employment of children below the age of 14, is prohibited in 13 Occupations and 57 Processes listed in the schedule to the Child Labour (Prohibition & regulation) Act, 1986. The employment conditions of children in other Occupations and Processes are regulated under the Act. The schedule does not include children working in Hotels, Dhabas and on the road.

Government of India has been implementing two schemes for the welfare and rehabilitation of child labourers namely, the Scheme of National Child Labour Projects (NCLP's) and the scheme of Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organisation. Under the Scheme of NCLP, 100 projects are under implementation in child labour endemic states for the benefit of about 2.10 lakh children withdrawn from work.

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

The Central Government is responsible for enforcement of the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, in Railways, major ports, mines, oil fields and establishment under the control of the Central Government. In all other cases, State/UT Governments are responsible for enforcement of the Act. Employers found employing children in occupations and processes prohibited under the Act are prosecuted under the provisions of the Act.

Rescue of bonded labourers

3455. DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that seventy bonded labourers were rescued from two landlords at Khajurala village in Punjab;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what stern steps have been taken against the landlords who engaged the labourers and made them bonded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Forty bonded labourers engaged in the construction of a cold storage at village Khajurala, District Kapurthala in Punjab have been rescued.

(c) F.I.R. was registered against two persons accused in the matter, under the relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, I860, the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. Both the accused were arrested and later released on bail.

Trade Unions' objection to amendments in I.D. Act

3456. DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the Central Trade Unions in the country are against the proposed amendments in the Industrial Disputes Act; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) It has been reported that confederation of Central Govt. Employees and Workers and All India State Government Employees Federation have expressed concern about the alleged anti-labour policies. The Government has noted their concern.